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THE MONTHLY GULL BULLETIN

AUDUBON ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC

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Birds of the Cazadero Region

The permanent summer camp of the San Francisco Area Council of the Boy Scouts of America is situated at Watson Station, near Cazadero, Sonoma County, California. The country is typical Coast Range and affords good opportunities for birding.

Below is a list of sixty-six species observed during the months of June and July 1929 by Emile R. Jacob and his group of bird students, submitted through Arthur H. Myer:

California Great Blue Heron
Anthony Green Heron
Black-crowned Night Heron
Wilson Snipe
Northern Turkey Vulture
North American White-tailed Kite
Cooper Hawk
Western Red-tailed Hawk
Sooty Dusky Grouse
Coast California Quail
Northern Killdeer
Spotted Sandpiper
Solitary Sandpiper
Western Mourning Dove
California Coast Screech Owl
Northern Short-eared Owl
Vaux Swift
White-throated Swift
Anna Hummingbird
Allen Hummingbird
Western Belted Kingfisher
Monterey Red-shafted Flicker
Western Pileated Woodpecker
California Acorn-storing Woodpecker
Willow Downy Woodpecker
Nuttall Ladder-backed Woodpecker
Northern Ash-throated Flycatcher
Black Phoebe
Yellow-bellied Western Flycatcher
Northern Violet-green Swallow
Barn Swallow
Tree Swallow
Bank Swallow
Western Purple Martin
Coast Stellar Jay
California Jay
Chestnut Backed Chickadee
California Plain Titmouse
Pacific Coast Bush-tit
Slender-billed Nuthatch
Tawny Brown Creeper
Ruddy Wren-tit
Northern American Dipper
Nicasio Bewick Wren
Western Winter Wren
Western Robin
Monterey Hermit Thrush
Pacific Russet-backed Thrush
Western Mexican Bluebird
Lutescent Orange-crowned Warbler
California Yellow Warbler
Golden Pileolated Warbler
Western Meadowlark
California Brewer Blackbird
Western Tanager
Pacific Black-headed Grosbeak
Lazuli Bunting
California Linnet
Willow American Goldfinch
Green-backed Arkansas Goldfinch
San Francisco Spotted Towhee
San Francisco Brown Towhee
Western Lark Sparrow
Oregon Junco
Marin Song Sparrow
Western Chipping Sparrow

In the November 1926 issue of The Gull, a list of fifty-one species for this region was compiled by Harold E. Hansen. It is interesting to note that while the present list contains twenty-three species not recorded in the 1926 list, the earlier list contained eight species not mentioned in the more recent list. Both lists together give a total for this region of seventy-four species. Editor.

Specific Versus Varietal Names in Audubon Field Reports

Why use a cumbersomely long name, when a conveniently short one will serve the purpose just as well?

Why "Northern" Western Gull, when just Western Gull indicates the bird one has observed?

Why "Coues" Caspian Tern, instead of plain Caspian Tern?

Why say "Intermediate" Wren-tit, "California" Brewer Blackbird, or "Santa Cruz" Chestnut-backed Chickadee, when one is identifying a Wren-tit, a Brewer Blackbird, or a Chestnut-backed Chickadee?

In certain types of ornithological study varietal names are necessary to designate groups of birds whose sub-specifically varying anatomy, range, or behavior, is under examination. For this purpose Latin trinomials are provided for the use of scientists when so engaged. All right. But the amateur bird student in the field, the general user of English names, is not engaged in sub-specific studies. He is interested in the birds that he "can name without a gun,"—that is, in species. Why then should he burden his writings or his speech or his memory with long sub-specific appellations?

The essential fact is this: sub-specific differences are not recognizable in the field. To this rule the exceptions are few indeed. The amateur needs names that will differentiate the birds which he can habitually identify, directly and with certainty; a Song Sparrow and a Fox Sparrow, for instance. He has no use for names like "Samuels" Song Sparrow and "Salt Marsh" Song Sparrow, or like "Kadiak" Fox Sparrow and "Yolla Bolly" Fox Sparrow. These latter indicate varietal differences that can only be recognized by comparing specimens in hand, or dubiously inferred from localities and dates.

Another reason: in Latin nomenclature a name with two words always indicates a species and a name with three words a sub-species. Simple and useful. But in English what do Lead-colored Bush-tit and Pacific Coast Bush-tit indicate? Are they two species of Bush-tit? Wrong! Are they two sub-species of Bush-tit? Wrong! One is a species and the other a sub-species, but you cannot tell which is which by the name. The use, then, of varietal names in English is confusing and misleading because it is impossible to tell from such a name whether a species or a sub-species is referred to.

The Audubon field trip historian who reports a "Western" Ruby-crowned Kinglet is not mentioning a variety of bird that he has identified. What he saw and identified was a species, a simple Ruby-crowned Kinglet. The "Western" is but an inference (and a very, very, shaky one at that). As the record of the presence of a certain species the report of a Ruby-crowned Kinglet may have scientific value—for the species can be directly and certainly identified. But the sight report of a "Western," or an "Eastern," or a "Sitka" Ruby-crowned Kinglet is valueless, for the sub-species cannot be directly identified in the field with the certainty of scientific requirements.

So why make the Audubon field trip reports so difficult to read (especially when they run to forty or more species) by cluttering them up with a profusion of words that are often misleading, generally valueless and always unnecessary to the amateur bird-student?

HERMAN DE FREMERY, January 31st, 1930.

There's a little more gold in the clear winter sky,
A little more life in the trees you pass by,
A little more joy in a friend's cheery words,
And life's a bit sweeter because of the birds.

E. C. O'ROKE.

Audubon Notes

May Meeting will be held on Thursday evening, the 8th, at 8 o'clock, room 19, 2nd floor, Ferry Building.

The speaker of the evening will be Dr. Harold C. Bryant. Subject: "Inter-relations pertaining to Birds." The lecture will be illustrated.

May Field Trip will be taken on Sunday, the 11th, to the home of Mr. John A. Brock, a noted aviculturist, in Oakland. An excellent opportunity will be afforded to study both native and exotic species of caged birds as well as native wild birds which are attracted by feeding tables. The morning will be spent at Mr. Brock's home. In the afternoon a walk will be taken into the nearby hills.

San Francisco members take Southern Pacific Ferry at 9 A. M. to Oakland pier and Seventh Street train to Seminary Avenue, and walk two short blocks south. Bring luncheon.

An extra May trip will be taken to McCoy's Ranch near Livermore, on May 18th. Members who have automobiles and are willing to take those who have none will please send their names and number of persons they can accommodate to C. A. Bryant, 150 Franklin Street, San Francisco, as soon as possible.

Members, without automobiles, who wish to make the trip, send in their names also.

April Meeting: The 159th regular meeting was held April 10th, in room 19, Ferry Building with forty members and guests present. President Brighton C. Cain, presiding.

The following new members were elected:

Herbert F. Allen, Oakland and Clarence F. Smith, San Francisco.

The matter of rats in Golden Gate Park was brought before the Association and a committee was appointed to investigate and to take action that the park authorities might be stimulated in the work of eradicating this pest.

Field observations were made as follows:

Mrs. Stephens: March 23rd, Wrentit, Golden Gate Park.

Miss Griffin: (letter) March 22nd, 5000 or more Black Sea Brant, Bodega Bay.

Mr. Lockerbie: March 22nd, 300 Black Sea Brant, Bolinas Bay; a colony of White-throated Swifts, near Stinson Beach, Marin County.

Miss Rinehart: March 23rd, hundreds of Band-tailed Pigeons, east shoulder of Mt. St. Helena.

Mr. Carl Smith: April 5th, Varied Thrush, San Francisco; April 6th, scarcity of shore birds noted on Bay Farm Island, however, observed Long-billed Dowitchers, Sandpipers, Willets, one Short-eared Owl and Black-bellied Plovers, the latter in winter plumage and at Dumbarton Bridge in full plumage; Baumberg duck pond, Long-billed Dowitcher, one pair of Cinnamon Teal and Black-necked Stilt; two Killdeer about 24 hours old.

Miss Werner: April 10th, nest of Coots, Golden Gate Park.

Mr. Jencks: April 6th, Varied Thrush, Oakland.

President Cain introduced the speaker of the evening, Dr. William E. Ritter, Director Emeritus of the Scripps Institute of Oceanography who spoke of the possibilities and needs of extending field studies to serious research.

Other Societies: The California Audubon Society had a very large attendance at its last meeting on the 10th ult., and heard an interesting illustrated talk on wild life on the Barro Colorado Island in Gatun Lake.

Mr. Lastreto's presence gave occasion for expressions of mutual friendliness and co-operation with the Audubon Association of the Pacific.

At the Cooper Club's annual meeting in Los Angeles, a paper by George Willet on "The Status of some Alaska Birds" led to a discussion on the proposed eagle protection legislation, disclosing a preponderance of evidence that the eagle is still very numerous and in no danger of extermination and does do damage particularly in such a country dependent upon game; that, however, no damage is done to fish of game or food value.

The Board of Governors endorsed the action of the Audubon Association

of the Pacific and the California Audubon Society leading to the popular expression of preference for the California Quail as our State Bird. Nothing is yet decided as to the next step to be taken to have the designation made official.

April Field Trip was taken to Lake Merced on Sunday the 13th. Early morning showers of cloud-burst proportions gave way to a day that was ideal for birding. The forenoon was spent along the ravine that leads from Junipero Serra Boulevard down to the lake, where luncheon was eaten. After luncheon both sides of the lake were worked, the party disbanding at Sloat Boulevard.

Birds were abundant and active, especially Anna and Allen Hummingbirds, Pileolated Warblers, Willow and Green-backed Goldfinches. An interesting feature was the presence of the six species of swallows. Cedar Waxwings in the eucalyptus seemed out of place. Jerusalem Crickets impaled at frequent intervals on the barbs of a wire fence indicated the activities of a Shrike which was present. An immature Gull furnished "the comic strip of the air," by circling over our heads, holding a full length tule stalk in his mandible.

Many nests of Allen Hummingbirds, containing eggs, were found in Monterey Cypress, Acacias and Poison Oak at heights varying from two and one-half to fifteen feet above the ground.

Bush-tits were completing an unusually large nest in a willow bush. A pair of Western Flycatchers were building a nest under a piece of loose bark on a eucalyptus tree. A pair of Mallards had a nest, containing thirteen eggs, on the ground by a burned stump about two hundred yards from the water and within fifty feet of a much used equestrian path.

Birds observed were: Horned, American Eared, Western and Pied-billed Grebes; Farallon Double-crested Cormorant; American Bittern; Common Mallard; Ruddy Duck; Red-breasted Merganser; Sharp-shinned and Western Red-tailed Hawks; Coast California Quail; American Coot; Glaucous-winged, Northern Western, California and Bonaparte Gulls; Anna and Allen Hummingbirds; Monterey Red-shafted Flicker; Black Phoebe; Yellow-bellied Western Flycatcher; California Horned Lark; Northern Violet-green, Tree, American Bank, Rough-winged, Barn and Northern Cliff Swallows; Santa Cruz Chestnut-backed Chickadee; Pacific Coast Bush-tit; Intermediate Wren-tit; Vigor's Bewick and Tule Marsh Wrens; Western Robin; Pacific Russet-backed Thrush; Cedar Waxwings; California Loggerhead Shrike; California Hutton Vireo; Lutescent Orange-crowned, Alaska Myrtle and Pacific Audubon Warblers; San Francisco Yellow-throat; Golden Pileolated Warbler; Western Meadowlark; San Francisco Red-winged and Brewer Blackbirds; English House Sparrow; California Purple Finch; California Linnet; Northern Pine Siskin; Willow American and Green-backed Arkansas Goldfinches; San Francisco Spotted Towhee; Fox Sparrow; Point Pinos Oregon Junco; Golden-, Nuttall White-crowned and Santa Cruz Song Sparrow. Fifty-nine species and sub-species.

Members present: Mr. and Mrs. Lockerbie, Mr. and Mrs. Stephens, Misses Ames. Kautz. Messrs. Bryant, Bunker. Jencks, Myer, James Smith.

Guests—Misses McNeal, Catharine. Edith and Janette Smith. Messrs. Bolander, Hawkins, Hussey, John Jencks, Kaufner, Miller, Reed, Clarence and Clifford Sandberg, Taranik.

Eleven members and fourteen guests. C. A. Bryant, Historian.

Audubon Association of the Pacific

For the Study and Protection of Birds

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